

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
June 16, 2021

Attendance

Board Members Present

Joseph Secrist, President	(R)
Walter Black	(D)
Richard Bulman	(R)
Wadella Thomas	(R)

Board Members Absent

Susan MacKinnon	(D)
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Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

Public

None

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on June 16, 2021. Due to restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, the meeting was held by videoconference and teleconference. The public was invited to listen by conference call and advised via the Board website and on the agenda of the procedure to do so. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 19, 2021, copies of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Black moved approval of the minutes as presented. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

Mr. Secrist asked if there were any additions to the agenda as published. Mr. Secrist asked that the agenda for the closed session include the Mid Cycle review of the

Election Director. Mr. Bulman noted that the Board should consider the meetings of the closed sessions held on December 16, 2020 and January 20, 2021. Ms. Cook asked that the Comprehensive Audit findings of the 2020 Primary and General Elections be added to the agenda under New Business. Ms. Thomas moved approval of the agenda with these additions. Mr. Black seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Cook provided a written report of the activities of the staff prior to the meeting. A copy of that report is attached. She elaborated on her written report as follows:

- Due to her planned attendance at the iGo conference in July, she requested that the Board Meeting in July be rescheduled to July 14.
- Per a conversation with the County Finance Officer, additional funds were added to our budget to cover the increase in costs for the election. This was approved by the County Council.
- Polling place rental agreements have been sent. Bozman UMC is not able to offer its facilities to serve as a polling location per a letter from the church.
- The process for recruiting Election Judges is underway.
- A new email address has been set up for the Talbot County Board of Elections. This will allow all staff members to see and respond to incoming email. The address is Talbot.Elections@Maryland.gov.
- Ms. Cook is scheduled to be off from July 6 through July 12.

Board Attorney's Report

Ms. Ryan had no items to report. She will be unable to attend the Biennial Meeting in Ocean City but will participate virtually on August 25 if possible.

Old Business

a. Facility for Election Office

Nothing new to report. The county reports that it is still reviewing the materials submitted in support of our space needs.

b. Budget FY2021

Ms. Cook previously provided reports on expenditures recorded by the county through March. She also provided a spreadsheet of the current budget as of June 1, 2021.

c. Review of Invoices

Ms. Cook previously provided Board Members with copies of invoices received since the last meeting. There were no questions from Board Members.

d. County Bulletins

Ms. Cook previously provided copies of County Bulletins to each Board Member. There were no questions from Board Members.

e. Budget FY2022

By memorandum dated May 26, 2021, County Manager Clay Stamp notified the Board that our budget for the coming year is as follows:

Board of Supervisors of Elections

Salaries & Benefits	\$306,871
Operating Expenses	\$233,680

Registration and Election

Salaries & Benefits	\$55,900
Operating Expenses	\$3,600

Funds for new Pollbooks have not been included.

f. Polling place agreements

Ms. Cook received notice that Bozman UMC is not able to offer its facility to serve as a polling location. Discussion followed regarding other possible locations or consolidating the polling place with St. Michaels High School. Ms. Cook was asked to further research possible locations and report back at the next Board Meeting with a recommendation regarding an alternative location or consolidating Bozman with St. Michaels High School.

g. MAEO/biennial conference

Ms. Cook asked that those Board Members who have not yet done so, complete the registration form and advise her of their plans for hotel rooms.

New Business

a. Change date of July board meeting

Ms. Cook will be attending a conference out of town on the date of the next scheduled Board Meeting and asked that the Board consider changing the date of the July meeting. Mr. Bulman asked that, since the County Council is meeting in person and our

bylaws state that the meetings be held in the election office unless circumstances dictate otherwise, we return to in person meetings. Ms. Cook noted that masks will be needed unless everyone has been vaccinated. Mr. Bulman moved that the July Board meeting be moved to July 14, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. and that the Board return to in person meetings. Mr. Black seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

b. Comprehensive audit

Ms. Cook previously provided the Board with copies of a memorandum dated June 10, 2021 from State Board of Elections Administrator Ms. Linda Lamone reporting on the findings of the Audit of Talbot County 2020 Presidential Primary and General Elections Procedures and Operations. Ms. Cook provided the Board with her comments on the items in the audit. She submitted to the Board a response to Ms. Lamone regarding her plans to address the issues and her disagreement with some of the action items. The response includes a statement to be signed by the President and Vice President confirming that the audit has been shared with the Board and reviewed by the Board Members. Ms. Thomas moved that the President and Vice President be authorized to sign the response and that Ms. Cook may sign the response electronically on their behalf. Mr. Bulman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Closed Session

Ms. Thomas moved that the Board go into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters as permitted under General Provisions Art. 3-305(b) (1). Mr. Black seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Whereupon the Board went into closed session at 10:13 a.m. for the purpose of discussing the Election Director's performance review. Present at this session were Board Members Mr. Secrist, Mr. Black, Ms. Thomas and Mr. Bulman. Board Attorney Lyndsey Ryan was also present.

At 10:27 a.m. the Board returned to open session where Ms. Cook was present. President Secrist reported that the Board completed the review of the Election Director's performance and approved the minutes of the December 16, 2020 and January 20, 2021.

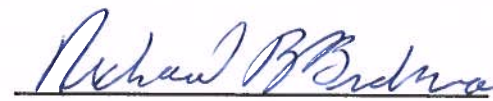
Adjournment

Mr. Black moved adjournment of the meeting. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Attested,


Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,


Richard B. Bulman, Secretary

June 2021

- Request July meeting to be moved to July 14, 9:30 am, due to my attendance at iGo conference in NY during the week of July 19th
- I received information from Angela Lane, Finance Office, that the council approved the transfer of funding for the 4th quarter for the additional costs for the election. The council was scheduled to vote on the FY22 budget on May 25. The approved FY2022 budget is in the packet.
- The polling place agreements went out to the various polling places on May 26th.
 - Received a phone call from a member of Bozman UMC and she said the trustees no longer want to have the church used as a polling place. I have requested a letter in writing to have the documentation for future reference.
 - Recommend consolidating with 2001 – St. Michael's High School
 - Will use SBE guidance to make this a smooth transition
 - Send out approximately 600 VNCs to let the voters know their new polling location
 - Send out a postcard closer to the election to remind voters of their new polling place
 - To date, have not received or heard from the other polling places.
- Staff is in the process of sending out interest forms to the election judges. We will begin to post on Facebook at a later date.
- We now have a new email address with access to the entire office, Talbot.elections@maryland.gov. This will be helpful in receiving information, especially during the election. It will be added to the website, some correspondence, etc.
- With the exception of a few meetings, I will be off June 24th through July 5th.
- Next Director's meeting will be held Thursday, June 17th
- Please make sure that you have sent your MAEO conference registration and hotel accommodations (if attending) to send to the county for processing in time of the deadlines.

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT")
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

This form has two sides. *Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.*

1. Recorded vote to close the meeting: Date: June 16, 2021; Time: 10:13 a.m.; Location: Virtual;
Motion to close meeting made by: W. Thomas; Seconded by W. Black;
Members in favor: Thomas, Black, Bulman, Secrist; Opposed: None; Abstaining: None; Absent:
S. MacKinnon.

**2. Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:**

(1) X "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; (2)___ "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; (3)___ "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; (4)___ "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; (5)___ "To consider the investment of public funds"; (6)___ "To consider the marketing of public securities"; (7)___ "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; (8)___ "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; (9)___ "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; (10)___ "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; (11)___ "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; (12)___ "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; (13)___ "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; (14)___ "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process." (15)___ "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to: (i) security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology; (ii) network security information . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

Continued →

3. For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b)(1)	Performance Review	Personnel Matter
§3-305(b) ()		
§3-305(b) ()		
§3-305(b) ()		
§3-305(b) ()		

4. This statement is made by Joseph H. Scavotto, Presiding Officer.

WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)

- For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:

Time of closed session: _____

Place: _____

Purpose(s): _____

Members who voted to meet in closed session: _____

Persons attending closed session: _____

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: _____

Topics actually discussed: _____

Actions taken: _____

Each recorded vote: _____

- For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104): Time: _____

Place: _____

Persons present: _____

Subjects discussed: _____